

Beaches Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY271753
Inspection date	04 October 2007
Inspector	Lisa Paisley
Setting Address	Westlands School, Beeches Close, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2SB
Telephone number	07709 603246
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Registered person	The Trustees of Beaches Pre-school
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Beaches Pre-school is run by a charity committee. It opened in its current premises in 2003 and operates from two classrooms within a local primary school, in Chelmsford, Essex. A maximum of 40 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.00 to 11.45 term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 50 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 37 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs seven staff. Five of the staff, including both managers, hold appropriate early years qualifications. One staff member is currently attending training. The pre-school receives support from the local council.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in an environment where very good hygiene practices are maintained and they learn about hygiene routines through washing their hands appropriately. For example, they wash their hands after creative activities, using the toilets and before snacks. Staff consistently apply agreed health procedures which ensures the risk of cross-infection is minimised and children's health and well-being is effectively promoted. Two staff members are first aid trained and arrangements are in place to ensure existing staff update their training. The first aid box is located in the room which is locked at all times, items are regularly checked and any medication is stored in a designated locked cabinet. This ensures that all children receive a very good level of care if they become ill, have an accident or require prescribed medication.

Children's awareness of the benefits of healthy eating is actively promoted at snack time. They enjoy a variety of healthy snacks such as apples, bananas, oranges, dried raisins, pineapple, cucumber and tomatoes. Snack time is a sociable occasion and a positive experience for all children, where they have the opportunity to talk about themselves and everyday experiences such as children's and staff's birthdays. Children learn why some foods are better for our bodies than others through planned topics, for example, 'ourselves'. Fresh drinking water is freely available throughout the session ensuring that they remain hydrated. Robust procedures are in place to support children with specific dietary requirements as children's forms are completed and are effectively maintained to promote their health and overall well-being.

Children enthusiastically enjoy a very wide variety of activities that contribute to keeping them healthy. They effectively use a range of activities on a daily basis, for example, tricycles, stilts, tactile balancing beam and scooters, developing their physical skills. Children enjoy climbing, balancing and playing ball games. Children's manipulative hand skills are successfully promoted through the very good range of tools such as scissors, pencils, paint brushes, threading and puzzles that children use well. Consequently children are progressing very well in all areas of their physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure, welcoming environment. All areas of play are bright, spacious and effectively laid out with clearly designated play areas such as the book corner, creative area and role play. The walls are brightly decorated with good quality displays of either children's artwork and current themes. Children are able to freely select a range of resources and play equipment, fostering their independence and confidence in choosing their own activities. Children benefit from using toys and play equipment which are maintained to a very high standard. They enthusiastically select their own play resources which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through gentle reminders from staff such as no running indoors, tidying away toys and practising regular fire drills to ensure they and the staff know how to evacuate the building quickly and safely in the event of an emergency or an incident.

Children's safety is effectively promoted as staff have very good measures in place both indoors and outdoors to ensure risks to children are minimised. For example, the entrance and all exits

and outdoor play areas are secure, all fire exits are clear and in working order and fire extinguishers and fire blanket are securely mounted and accessible to staff. Clear and effective arrival and departure procedures allow for the safe arrival and collection of the children to and from the pre-school. Clearly written safety procedures are in place and they are consistently applied by staff, such as the lost child policy and the uncollected child policy. Staff have a very good awareness of how to organise space, furniture and equipment appropriately to enable children to move freely and with independence between activities and different play areas.

Children are effectively safeguarded as staff have a secure understanding of their responsibilities regarding child protection. A written policy is in place and this includes a statement with regard to an allegation being made against a staff member. There is a designated person responsible for safeguarding children. The pre-school have received details regarding the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). However, staff have not yet familiarised themselves of the new procedure and the child protection policy has not been updated to ensure the welfare of children is fully safeguarded. Parents are informed of the pre-school's responsibility regarding child protection reassuring parents of their child's safety and well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very well occupied throughout the session and show good interest and purposeful play in what they do. They are able to make choices about the activities they choose and move independently around all the areas of the setting, both indoors and outside. Children are supported very well during the session and are secure as staff have a very good understanding of children's individual needs. They feel secure and valued as staff have good nurturing skills, this enables children to settle quickly into the environment and move confidently between activities. Young children are provided with a very good range of activities, for example, sand, water, play dough, puzzles, books, construction and role play.

Young children are confident and are making good progress. Developmental records are completed on the younger children, ensuring that their needs are being met and activities are appropriately planned. Staff have obtained the 'Birth to three matters' framework which they use effectively to plan play and learning opportunities that support and encourage the development of the two-year-olds who attend the pre-school.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children play and learn. Planning is very detailed and comprehensive, covering all the required elements of the curriculum, including differentiation and assessments, however, focus activity plans have not yet been implemented to enable staff to identify next steps in children's learning. Planning covers the six areas of learning very well, however, visitors into the pre-school is not fully developed to support children's understanding of the wider world. A very good key worker system is in place and staff use individual profiles to record children's developmental progress. The structure of the session is free play with an emphasis on children's choice, snack time and planned circle times provide further purposeful play and learning experiences.

Children are developing very good attitudes and dispositions towards their learning and the older and more able children are keen to complete tasks such as threading, matching items and building a balancing beam. They enjoy participating in a very good range of activities provided

and are encouraged to independently select resources and initiate their own activities and games. Children show a secure sense of belonging as they greet staff and each other upon arrival. They work very well together and understand the importance of co-operation during group activities. For example, children sharing the train track and taking turns. Children are confident speakers, using words effectively and a range of vocabulary to convey their experiences both real and imaginary. The book corner is warm, welcoming and inviting for children and they are confident and enjoy looking at books with either their friends or the staff such as 'The Monkey Puzzle' story. Children confidently use tools and resources to make marks and they particularly enjoy using chalks to draw around one another and large paint brushes to wash the walls. They have good opportunities to recognise and write their own names independently through daily routines, for example, self-registration. Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy is suitably promoted through daily routines and they particularly enjoyed counting to 10 and back again to 'blast off'. They have very good opportunities to sort objects and participate in matching games. Older and more able children are beginning to count up to 10 and beyond confidently. Cooking, sand and water activities provide children with good experiences of weight, size and capacity.

Children have good opportunities to find out about the natural world through topics, for example, mini beasts and life cycles of the caterpillar and frogs. They occasionally go on trips out into the community such as Barleylands farm and people are invited into the pre-school to talk about their work such as the fire safety officer. Children are developing a very good awareness of the uses of information technology in everyday life and are able to operate equipment such as domestic items, the computer and electronic typewriter. Their imaginations and free expression is effectively promoted through the excellent range of activities such as play dough, painting, water, sand, role-play, craft activities and music and movement. They enjoy music and movement, using the instruments freely to experiment rhythm and sound patterns. Children enjoy participating in nursery rhymes such as 'Row Your Boat'. Their physical skills are effectively promoted through a variety of mediums, for example, the climbing frame, tricycles, balls, hoops and beanbags. They particularly enjoy and work hard at balancing on the tactile beam and walking on stilts. Children's manipulative skills are well promoted through the very good range of activities such as threading, puzzles, building with small bricks and mark-making tools.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by staff who work closely with parents to meet individual children's needs. They enjoy good relationships with staff, building on their well-being and confidence. Each child is valued and respected as an individual as staff know the children's individual personalities well. Children with learning difficulties and or physical disabilities and those who have English as an additional language take part fully in all pre-school activities. They are well supported by staff who have a positive approach to meeting their needs. A named member of staff works with parents and outside agencies to ensure that all children develop confidence and make good progress.

Children benefit from having access to a range of play resources which promote positive images of diversity and they participate in activities which promote their awareness of different festivals and cultures, for example, Diwali where they made lion masks, Easter, Christmas and Chinese New Year. However, this is not fully developed as there are limited opportunities for a range of play experiences. Consequently, children's learning of the wider world is not fully developed. Children work harmoniously with others as staff create an environment that values positive

behaviour. Staff provide very good role models for children by being calm and polite. Praise and encouragement are given freely to children, ensuring that they develop confidence and self-esteem and understand that they have done well. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are fully informed about the provision the pre-school offers and how their children are progressing. Parents are welcomed into the pre-school to help their children to settle or to talk to staff about any concerns they may have. Parents also receive regular newsletters which keep them up to date with activities and events. Children's learning is encouraged in the home through children taking home books from pre-school and they are encouraged to bring in items from home, linked to current topic work. Children also have to opportunity to take 'Spot and Dot' (toy dogs) home where a diary is maintained and shared within the pre-school. Good quality information and notices on the information board and around the provision informs parents about the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. Regular meetings are arranged with parents to discuss their child's developmental progress, ensuring that parents are fully informed about all aspects of their child's care and development.

Parents are aware of how to make complaints about the provision and these are dealt with in a prompt and professional way. Staff listen to parents' concerns and, where appropriate, adapt their policies and procedures accordingly.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are provided with a very good level of care, supported and enhanced by the clear policies developed and implemented by the pre-school. These ensure that staff are consistent in their interactions with children and in their regard for safety and security. Records and details relating to staff and children are obtained, recorded and stored appropriately, ensuring that the pre-school is meeting legal requirements relating to the National Standards.

Children are cared for by staff who have been checked through the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and who have undergone a recruitment and induction programme. This ensures that all staff working with children are suitable and have relevant training and experience. The use of available space within the pre-school is effectively organised, with clear designated areas for play, storage, food preparation, changing and eating. These areas are effectively managed by staff to allow children to play, eat and rest safely and securely.

The leadership and management of the pre-school is good. The manager, deputies and staff are enthusiastic, highly motivated, committed and professional in their approach to providing children with positive early years play experiences and learning. They have a very good understanding of the importance of early childhood development and they work hard to consistently provide good care for all children. Staff have clearly identified roles and responsibilities such as health and safety and behaviour management and they carry out their roles effectively. Staff induction and appraisals ensure that new and existing staff feel fully supported and valued in their role. They are deployed successfully within the pre-school and good staffing ratios are maintained during the session ensuring children are well supervised and supported during activities. Staff have an excellent awareness of the policies and procedures which are in place. Consequently, children are cared for by knowledgeable, experienced staff and they benefit from excellent continuity of care.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider agreed, to review the provision made for very young children to ensure that it is fully meeting their individual needs and review and update the child protection policy and the arrangements to share child protection procedures with parents. The pre-school have reviewed the provision for the care of young children, the 'Birth to three matters' framework has been implemented in the planning of activities and for assessing their developmental progress. The child protection policy has been updated, however, further amendments are required relating to the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Overall, the pre-school has made positive improvements with regard to the care of children.

At the last education inspection there were no key issues identified. A point for consideration was to implement a system to monitor and evaluate the quality of nursery education and continue to extend the planning process to include use of the outdoor play area. A system is now in place for staff to effectively monitor and review the quality of the nursery education and the outdoor play area has been further developed to provide children with purposeful play experiences. Consequently, the pre-school has made consistent improvements in the nursery education for children.

Complaints since the last inspection

There has been one complaint made to Ofsted. A concern was raised in relation to National Standard 1 - Suitability. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to investigate this concern. At the visit there was evidence that National Standard 1 - Suitability and National Standard - 14 documentation were not being met. As a result the provider was given three actions under National Standard 1.2, 1.4, 14.2. A satisfactory response has been received by Ofsted and the provider remains registered.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- update staff knowledge of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and amend the child protection policy to reflect the change in procedures

- develop further resources, activities and play experiences to reflect positive images of culture, gender and disability.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- review activity plans to include focus activities with clear learning intentions
- develop further children's understanding of the local community.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk